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THE ARYAN PATH

Point out the "Way"—however dimly, and lost among the host—as does the evening star to those who tread their path in darkness.
—The Voice of the Silence

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A NEW CRITIQUE OF THEISM

I.—A SURVEY OF ARMIES

[The preoccupation of the human mind, and pre-eminently of the Indian mind, from time immemorial, with That which transcends human conception is one of the most significant features of human consciousness. **Shri P. Chenchiah**, a prominent South Indian Christian, Retired Chief Judge of Pudukkottah State, traces the course of theistic thought and describes recent developments in the schools of Sri Aurobindo, Sri C. V. V. and the Christo-Samaj in this thoughtful study which we are publishing in three consecutive issues of THE ARYAN PATH.—ED.]

The direction of the current of religious development in Hinduism stands in one respect in sharp and clear contrast to the course of religious thought in the West. In Hinduism, from Nature worship symbolised in personalised forces of nature contacted and induced into human fellowship through Yajna (sacrifice), we pass to an unparalleled revolution in which intellect predominates at first and retains its primacy to the end. Of the second phase much has been written that is both illuminating and instructive. But of its broad drift in creating an atmosphere—almost a spiritual climate—more could be said without provoking the charge of repetition. The method that turned the pursuit into the psychic realms of the mind, from the outward research in the realm of physics, the stress on unity and identity as the technique of realisation—these are not more striking than the diversity of ultimate ends reached.

The nihilism of Jainism and of Buddhism, which embodies the philosophic doubt of the all-embracing substratum, was as much the result of new thought as the realisation that the manifold of life, the variety of existence, can be pushed back or made to re-enter its origin, which, swallowing its own offspring, com-

prehends in its undifferentiated omnipresence the ultimates of nature and of self—Brahman and Atman. The identification of the individual self with Paramatman was certainly its impressive achievement as well as its perennial attraction. In all these aspects the Upanishads carried with them the imprimatur of intellect which, in ancient as well as in modern times, has led us to well-thought-out agnosticism or to pantheistic monism. The wonder is that the religious development did not stop at the summit of its intellectual achievement but moved on to Saivite and Vaishnavite theisms which in their uncompromising moments sternly refused to dissolve Siva and Vishnu in any ultimate background. The current moved on, reaching its finale in the concept of Incarnation.

In striking contrast stands the Western religious movement. Starting, like the Indian, in some form of nature-worship mediated by some kind of sacrifice, we find all these beginnings swept into a form of Christianity—in essence of a pronounced *bakthi* (devotional) type and directed towards the central and all-engrossing figure of Jesus, conceived as the incarnation. The intellectual awakening, carrying with it the inevitable disillusionment and disintegration of the structures of faith, issued in its highest pronouncements in nihilism or agnosticism and even in a belief in God as the ultimate support of all existence or as a name for the totality, not in its prolific variety but in its finally attenuated though cosmically extended form.

In Hinduism the middle and final stages of religious development are therefore the reverse of the corresponding stages of the Western development. The intellectual understanding of life is the final philosophic phase of religion in the West, while a pronounced monotheism forms the climax of religion in India. Using an inaccurate though useful term, monism, we may say that monism issued out of theism in the West while in the East monism has developed into theism. A curious result followed from this fact. In the West theism stands in perpetual danger of assaults from the verdicts of science and philosophy, both ranging themselves in opposition to religion, whereas in India theism sprang out of the fiery ordeal of science (*Sankya*) and intellect and fears no danger from those quarters.

The view that the theistic phase was not contemporaneous with other phases of the Upanishadic age, but was the result of a reaction to its fundamental tendencies, is assailed from two opposite directions. Western scholars have held that Indian theism and Upanishadic Brahmanism are ripe fruits of different branches of the same tree, that the Rig-Vedic cultus branched in two divergent directions, producing the pantheism of the Upanishads at one end and the theism of Saiva and Vishnu at the other, and that the latter did not arise as a reaction

to the former. The other attack comes from those who hold, with the Brahmo Samaj, that theism was as much the fruit of Upanishadic enquiry as Nihilism and Brahmanism were. Neither of these views can be sustained in the light of religious tradition and modern criticism.

In the prevailing uncertainties of Vedic chronology, making it well-nigh impossible to fix the sequence of even the classical Upanishads, we are denied a direct appeal to historical development. This much is certain—that the *Brihadaranyaka* and *Chandogya Upanishads* represent the classic type of Upanishadic speculation and, while we cannot negative the possibility of the *Isha* representing a simultaneous or even an antecedent line of thought, we cannot with any certainty affirm it. The argument in support of the position maintained above derives its strength from the later development's throwing its light backwards rather than from contemporaneous sources. If it be permissible to hold that in the Upanishads we have the antithetic swing from the Rig-Vedic cult, marking a radical change in temper, mood and method, it is more likely that pantheistic monism was its earlier fruit and theism a later synthesis, emerging from the modification of earlier impressions in the light of wider and deeper experience or, at any rate, of experience subjected to more thoroughgoing criticism and examination. The following grounds derived from tradition lend support to this critical estimate :—

The traditional arrangement of the six Darsanas into three pairs, each pair including an anterior nir-Iswara Darsana (a system of philosophy without personal God) and a posterior Iswara Darsana (a system of philosophy with personal God), carries memories of the chronological order of emergence of these systems of speculation and investigation. Sankya and Yoga, though using the same scientific framework, differ in the one rejecting and the other accepting the category of Iswara. There can hardly be any doubt that Sankya represents the most ancient stratum of Indian scientific metaphysics. The emergence of Yoga, posterior to it though living in traditional conjunction with it, indicates that the necessity of postulating Iswara arose among those who were willing to accept to a large extent the Sankya science. The conflict between Sankara's Adwaitism and Ramanuja's Vishishtadwaitism, even in their periods of truce and amity, bears witness to the truth that philosophic theism has neither entirely denied nor completely endorsed the presuppositions and the background of Adwaita but has expressed itself in a revision of the Adwaita doctrine as the exponent of the fundamental tendency of the Upanishads.

The Saivite and Vaishnavite theism of the Darsana scheme refutes the suggestion that the monotheism of the Puranas is the evolutionary product of the Rig-Vedic cult.

Apart from the fact that none of the major gods of the *Rig Veda* were promoted to the Lordship of the Universe, as we should have expected in any evolutionary movement, the two gods each of whom became the God of Gods are patently related, in their majestic stature and in the Yoga form of worship associated with them before Agama (temple) worship came into vogue, to the "One" of the Upanishads. Both Rudra and Vishnu had to undergo so radical a change, the former in name and personality as Siva and the latter in personality though not in name, that we cannot without extreme violence to facts ascribe to either of them Rig-Vedic ancestry. At best they owe to the Rig-Vedic age their names and nothing else and to the Upanishads their figures and their features.

Whether this reading of the situation be accepted or not, it should be conceded that in the Upanishads, whatever other views were maintained, there was a prominent view, later developed and advocated by Sri Sankara, identifying the Jivatma with Paramatman and denying to the latter independent personality in any sense. Should this be taken as the pre-Buddhistic world view characteristic of the main Upanishads, Buddhism and theism (however much other feeders, existing before and afterward, contributed to swell the tide) have been shaped in their courses by critical reaction to this dominant trend—Buddhism denying Brahman and theism putting more content into Brahman than Advaitism permits. However we state the case, the problem remains, and with the same implications.

Whence then did this reaction arise? Why was the Aryan mind not completely satisfied with the findings of Adwaita? Why did it seek to restate them in theism? The enquiry is not one of antiquarian or academic interest. The new critique of Vedanta which in another aspect is also a critique of traditional theism and of yoga as well, associated with Sri Aurobindo, Sri C.V.V. and the Christo Samaj derives its value and its weight from the pregnant conclusions they draw from the theistic reaction to Sankarite Adwaitism in some of its aspects.

P. CHENCHIAH

INSECURITY—THY NAME'S LIBERTY

[**Paul Eldridge** writes on what might well be described as the maya aspect of politico-social progress revealed by history. History repeats itself and yet does not, for its curve is a spiral, which curve is traced by minds educated and hearts disciplined by extraordinary knowledge. Men of resolute Will are the makers of history whom the masses follow for woe or for weal. Modern politico-social civilisation is failing and will continue to do so till men understand the real meaning of the ancient Aryan concepts of Liberty and Democracy enshrined in three great words—Dharma, the Law of Duty to be practised by the individual; Swaraj, Self-Government, which starts with that individual governing his own self; and Swadesh, the Land of the Self, transcendent and then incarnate in the individual. Narrow patriotism, false nationalism, and untrue palaver of rights of men and women when duties are neglected has wrecked the Occidental civilisation and instead of India and Asia copying the West, the new world of the Americas should try to perceive the truth and righteousness of the ancient Asiatic teachings of Krishna, Buddha, Confucius, and make them applicable to collective life. Great minds like Ashoka did this and their labours may be profitably copied.—ED.]

" Those whom we lift upon shoulders remain to ride upon our necks. "

No greater falsehood has been propounded than the dictum: History repeats itself. And no profounder truth. In infinity parallel lines meet and in eternity centuries flatten and merge. Man, however, lives neither in infinity nor in eternity, and even what he calls historic perspective is but a very limited segment of time and space.

And during that segment what has repeated itself? At a cursory glance —everything—wars and armistices, democracies and autocracies, dictators and martyrs, justice and iniquity, slavery and revolution. And always—the passions of men: greed and vanity and hate and the lust for power. But look more intently and what *has* repeated itself? Nothing! The Greek democracy was not the American. The Roman justice was not the Anglo-Saxon. The revolution of the Gracchi brothers was not the French. The ancient dictatorship was not the fascist. The former, for instance, feared the education of the masses; the latter feared illiteracy. An illiterate man might think for himself—stammeringly and in monosyllables, to be sure, but he remained unpredictable, whereas the man appropriately educated was securely glued and nailed within the required frame.

So with martyrdom. So with iniquities. So with all passions. Nothing has permanency save words and every word in time devours the idea which gave it birth.

The notion of eternal repetition is one of man's many devices for avoiding responsibility. If history will always be the same whatever the effort, why the effort? It is also the idealist's logic of appeasement. What if a generation is sacrificed? Never mind man, as long as humanity is saved—and humanity is always the same. History excuses everything, making it possible to view with equanimity the daily crucifixion of man by man.

And yet the significance of the individual as well as of the generation is derived from their eternal uniqueness. Reproduction would render them graceless and meaningless. Today, by a peculiar irony, the very people who would save us from this faceless existence and protect us against tyrants unconsciously employ the opiate of historic recurrence and thus may achieve the reverse of their ambition.

Oceans of ink are spilled and mountains of paper levelled to warn us of the machinations of Fuehrers and Duces, present and future. Editorials, pamphlets, plays, novels, diaries, biographies—all recount eloquently, soberly, drearily, the rise to power of a man with a ridiculous moustache and of another with a jutting chin.

Who, young or old, does not know their techniques, both the subtle and the heavy-handed? Who cannot answer the long catechism of their trickeries? What nose would not discern the symptoms of the foul disease? Our eyes are sharply focused to detect the microscopic burgeon of the evil bristles; our ears are finely attuned to capture the embryonic gurgle of the bluster of the braggadocio. And, since history repeats itself, we are now secure and before long we shall be smug!

Meanwhile the dregs of events are spawning new menaces with new titles and new ways; new tyrants licking our vanity as tigers lick the flesh they are about to devour. But we have been so rigidly conditioned to one set of circumstances, so thoroughly regimented, that there is grave danger of failing to recognize them until they have grown beyond our powers of resistance, and once again we are caught in a chimeric net.

Well, then, what to do? How unmask these treacherous disguises?

Nothing in Nature promises perennial safety, nothing guarantees indestructibility. Indeed, even as pain is the primal condition of physical survival, so the awareness of insecurity is the basis of social. And as the body is in perpetual warfare with malignant germs, likewise is society with the germs of injustice and tyranny. However, as the wisest way to stave off disease is to create conditions in which it would be hindered from flourishing, so must environments be created in which the enticing music of the Pied Pipers of enslavement would reveal its hollow falseness.

As the sword is the stoutest armour, so is aggressive vigilance the mightiest defence. Therefore, each generation—at home, at school, in the market-place—must be implanted with such passion for freedom and justice that it will blossom as a perpetual flame, burning to ashes the fluttering ambitions of all would-be despots, whatever their roots, their names, or their counterfeit pretensions.

PAUL ELDRIDGE

NEEDED : A NEW PATRIOTISM

[**Mr. W. H. Aston's** account of his war experiences, including two years—after he was wounded—in a hospital in Nazi-occupied Paris, appeared recently in *Nor Iron Bars a Cage.* He is co-author of another volume, *Hitler Divided France.* The new patriotism envisaged by him is one in which the " wider vision of the world as a single entity " will replace the narrow national outlook based on the lust for power. It calls for the intellectual recognition that humanity is an indivisible family in which every nation, however small, has a distinct contribution to make, and on the enlightened application in practice of " the humane principles and ideals which are the basis of the Christian religion, " as Mr. Aston points out. We agree, yet would add that such principles and ideals do not belong exclusively to the doctrine of true Christianity, but were preached long before Jesus by all great Spiritual Reformers, pre-eminently by Buddha.—ED.]

Perhaps the most hopeful sign of better things is the realism with which, since the last war, the problems of the present and the future—particularly in relation to peace and war—are being tackled. That such realism should be tinged with cynicism is inevitable in view of the failures of the inter-war years, but even that is preferable to the easy optimism which followed the World War of 1914-1918. No one now imagines that the war just fought was a war to end wars or that, with the world as it is at present organised, peace can be maintained unless those professing to uphold it have at their disposal the means of enforcing it against a potential aggressor. No nation must be able with impunity to defy the United Nations Organisation and then be allowed to pursue a course that will inevitably lead to war.

This changed attitude reveals much solid achievement, although of a somewhat negative character, in that it presupposes that the will of nations to peace is not something upon which implicit reliance can be placed. It is perhaps significant that the disinterested service of men of all nations to beat the Axis Powers has, after the achievement of that task, been followed by a dissatisfaction which has led to internal difficulties in many countries—strikes and mutinies—which find their counterpart in the wider and infinitely more important field of international politics. This dissatisfaction is symptomatic of a desire to find a new way of living which will result in freedom from the threat of war and dread of economic want.

The future would certainly be assured if such disinterested service as the war called forth could now be directed towards the ends of lasting peace. That such a revolutionary change cannot be brought about overnight is certain ; that the world

faces suicide unless such a change is brought about in our generation is equally certain. In so far as the will of man determines his destiny, so must he re-educate himself or be re-educated to a new conception of the world, the part in it which his own nation has to play and the contribution which it has to make to the good of mankind.

The theory that modern means of communication between nations would lead to rapidly improved relationships has already been disproved; the result so far has been the more efficient delivery of weapons of destruction. What contacts there have been in the past between the peoples of different nations have been largely superficial, restricted to a few, and have left untouched the mass of the people who have had only the views of their newspapers on which to base their opinion of foreigners. Nor is the reading of history books likely to do other than underline existing prejudices and suspicions.

Since it is too much to hope that there will in the next few years be any possibility of a better understanding among nations as the result of personal contacts, man will have to adapt his narrow national outlook to the wider vision of the world as a single entity, a world in which his own country has an important but not the only or the principal part to play, as opposed to the existing world of conflicting national interests or political creeds. In this respect Great Britain has already given a lead. The need of a new conception of national sovereignty has been acknowledged, not as something which involves the surrender of national sovereignty as we now know it, but as the fusion of such sovereignty with that of other nations for the benefit of the community of the world. And this is an objective which ultimately must have for its goal the distribution of the raw materials of the world in such a way that all nations, whatever their creed or colour, can participate according to their needs. Moreover, the resources of the world must be developed to their fullest possible extent in accordance with such needs and not be liable to restriction for the benefit of the few according to the operation of some out-moded economic law.

These are the desiderata for which in fact the United Nations Organisation has been formed, but more is needed for their fulfilment than the good-will of a few well-meaning statesmen. People of all countries who devote themselves, either by necessity or desire, in time of war to their country's cause must in time of peace equally and with the same devotion apply their minds to the problems effecting the well-being of the world. To bury one's head in the sand or to relapse into apathy would prove equally disastrous. The problems of peace are as much the concern of the man in the street as are those of war and must be faced with equal determination and courage in an endeavour to uphold

those principles for which the war was fought.

But how can the re-education of nations be achieved? How can the prejudices and the misconceptions of a generation be broken down? Wars, it is now generally agreed, are not caused by economic want so much as by the lust for power, although never have there been more abundant opportunities than at the present moment for the development and fair division of the resources of the world. The time is rapidly approaching when the material needs of mankind can be met so as to ensure—even by comparison with the highest levels—a reasonable standard of living for all. When this stage has been reached, there will be more opportunity for the individual to devote himself to something beyond a wild scramble for the goods of the world, more opportunity for him to enlarge his outlook beyond a purely materialistic interpretation of life.

The idea of a new patriotism to replace the lust for power must be bound up with something more than mere economic betterment. *This new patriotism can be founded only on the spiritual regeneration of the whole of mankind, to which East and West alike can in varying degrees make their contribution. It is as well to remember that some civilisations of the East date back many thousands of years, only in modern times to have been corrupted by the materialism of the West and by creeds alien to the beliefs which are the foundation of such civilisations.* Too little is heard also of the contribution that small nations have made to culture. Even in a world in which three Powers predominate, great and small nations of both hemispheres can play their part when it is recognised that greatness is not synonymous with power, or prosperity the criterion of culture. In any world organisation the swamping of the small nations or their bartering as pawns on a political chessboard could only be compared with the contempt in which the human person is held in the authoritarian state, and would be as much to be deplored.

The liberty of the individual to lead his own life, and the freedom of small nations freely to develop, both culturally and economically, according to their own ideals, on the basis of the four freedoms for which the last war was ostensibly fought, are the foundations of any new patriotism. Unfortunately the fact that the political evolution of nations is not equal does not encourage the belief that the complete liberty of nations and individuals is something which can be achieved without both patience and tolerance. That the intelligence of man is equal to such a task is certain, but if there is to be any new patriotism in the world it will be founded on the humane principles and ideals which are the basis of the Christian religion and the basis of the kindness and tolerance that in spite of the war exist today.

Morality may now be at a partic-

ularly low ebb following the end of the war, but signs are already apparent of a desire for something better, of a groping for that way of life which in the past has stood the test of time and can weather the storms and stresses of the future. There are indications of a revival of belief in those Christian ideals which alone can lead to that change in the hearts and minds of men which will bring about the conditions essential to a world of peace and security. The fullest support and encouragement should be given to such a revival so that those whose task it will be to govern in the future can apply those ideals, not only in relation to the affairs of their own country but also, and what is vastly more important, to their dealings with other countries. Never was there greater opportunity than at the present time for those in authority, through the mediums of the press and the wireless, to educate all people to a new way of life ; for the governments of all countries to propound the principles of humanity which are essential to the peace of the world, and at all times to conform to them in dealing with national and international affairs. It is to be hoped that similarly, step by step, there will be spread the ideals of a new patriotism, and that press and radio, instead of being employed as instruments for propaganda and for presenting lop-sided pictures of events, will in all countries be used to infuse new ideas and ideals of world co-operation and of durable peace. Perhaps when people are given a little of what is good for them rather than what they want or imagine is good for them, it will be possible for everyone to travel without a passport in any country of the world and to live in freedom from fear and want.

Even more important will be the whole-hearted backing which men of all nations must give to that organisation which will eventually take the form of a world government, a government of which the United Nations Organisation is the obvious beginning ; a government not created to interfere in the affairs of nations, although if necessary to assist in the conduct of such affairs, but one accepted freely by all nations and recognised as the sole authority capable, by the application of the principles of justice, of acting for the benefit of the world as a whole. That government would be the focal point of the new patriotism.

Thus alone will the nations of the world be able to develop without fear of domination by others and in the sure knowledge that the resources of the world, both material and spiritual, are theirs equally to share with others. It is to be hoped that this is something which the United Nations Organisation, with the good-will and sincerity of all its members, will ultimately be able to achieve.

W. H. Aston

INDO-AMERICAN AMITY

[American by birth and Indian by marriage, **Mrs. Judith Ames Appasamy** appropriately writes here on a theme close to her heart as it must be to the heart of everyone convinced of the important rôles which India and America —the Mother of Civilisation and Civilisation's youngest exponent—must jointly play in the world of the future.—ED.]

East is East and West is West
The twain shall meet
And learn to dwell in Amity.

A million American soldiers, both white and coloured, passed through Lucknow between September and December 1945 on their way home from the India, Burma and China theatres of war. Every day a train load of five to seven hundred soldiers came, *en route* home via Karachi. The American army maintained at the station a colonel, a doctor and several helpers and a batch of ruby-nailed Red Cross girls, who, with the help of an American canteen, fed these soldiers, ran a store, supplied unlimited quantities of coffee and doughnuts, writing material, games, music and all recreational facilities, right on the station platform. They also arranged for sight-seeing tours. The British army supplied the lorries; and a few of us in town acted as volunteer tourist guides. During the meagre hour and a half allotted to us we tried to squeeze in as many places of historical interest as we could. After we got them back to the station, we helped the girls serve food, or sat about chatting with the boys, or played games with them and last, but not least, waved farewell to them as their train pulled out to the tune of military bagpipes. We often felt like "movie" stars from the number of autographs they asked us to sign.

We had greater contact with the American personnel that stayed here. We found that most of them were intensely interested in Indian habits and customs. We brought them to our Indian hostel dinners, where they ate purees, kababs, pilau and curries. We took them to Hindu homes for the Dasara and Diwali festivals and to outdoor pageantries such as the burning of Ravana. We also took them to Moslem homes where they heard the recitation of the majlis; and to the Imambaras which were illuminated on the eighth of Mohurram. One of the Red Cross girls, on the eve of her leaving India, wrote: "Before leaving I want you to know how much I appreciate all you did to make my visit to Lucknow so enjoyable. I feel that while there I learned and saw more of India than all the rest of my time here and it was more than kind of you to think of and include us in those things that you thought might interest us."

A branch of the East and West

Fraternity was started by Mr. Appasamy in Lucknow primarily to bring about better relations between East and West. Lucknow was rather fortunate in being one of the stations chosen by the American army for the furlough of its soldiers. A set of rooms was kept booked in each hotel for the plane loads of G.I.'s who came and went every week. In the early days we went from hotel to hotel and invited the boys to our meetings which were, and still are, held twice a month. In the East and West Fraternity, they had a chance of meeting some of the *élite* of Lucknow. In addition to this, we took several to the Rotary Club dinners. From these various contacts many of the soldiers were invited to homes, dinners and sight-seeing trips where they were helped in buying some of the lovely Indian things to send home as presents. Some of them were even invited on shooting trips which they enjoyed immensely. On the whole, the majority of them enjoyed these cultural contacts. America will have a much higher appreciation of India when the million American soldiers and Red Cross girls return, I am sure. They are bound to take back a better impression of India than most Americans have had in the past.

There has not been much cultural contact between America and India in the past, due probably to America's great distance, to the lack of good literature on India, and also perhaps to the fact that India was a subject nation of another great power. Missions and missionaries have been one great link, but their primary purpose has been to impose their culture, not to absorb Eastern culture. Their presentation of India in America has not always been fair. But they have done some good. They have started social reform to improve educational facilities among Indian women, who are now taking part in the nation's politics, forming clubs and societies for the uplift of Indian women. Women can usually be depended upon to take the lead once they are made conscious of their importance in the scheme of things. The greatness of a country depends upon the treatment of its women. That is why the co-educational system in America is the best in the world. Travancore is a good illustration of this. It is the only state in India which has tried the co-educational system; with the result that one finds women from Travancore all over India, holding very high positions.

There has never been any exceptionally good book written on India, at least not in English. *The Rains Came, Indigo* and *A Passage to India* are about the best so far; but nowhere nearly as good as Dr. Lin Yutang's or Pearl Buck's books on China. Most writers on India in the past spent so much time looking for the rubbish or the bizarre, that they entirely overlooked the really beautiful and charming pattern of India. There is no book which brings out the joint-family system of India nor is there any good novel of school or

college life in India, of the type of *Tom Brown's School Days*. Any American who is a total stranger to India and who wants to know something about this great land could not do better than read *Introduction to India* by Moraes and Stimson (an Oxford University Press publication), or *My India, My America* by Dr. Shridharani. It is a pity that one or both of these books could not be made compulsory in every American school.

If, like the Rhodes Scholarships, which take American and other students to England, or like the Boxer Indemnity Fund which takes a large number of Chinese students to America, some such set of scholarships could be founded for Indian students, it would make for much better amity between India and America. Some of the reasons why Indian students have not gone to America in the past are the great distance and the huge outlay required to go there; also the fact that the United States is a very costly place in which to live. Students have been rather encouraged to go to Great Britain, partly due to the specialised educational system prevailing in India and also because Indian students have come back from America with revolutionary ideas. This war has changed a great deal of that. Another great factor that has kept Indian students from going to America has been her unfriendly immigration laws, which have never been fair to Asiatics. Her excuse, of course, has always been that their standard of living is lower. In this matter, the Americans who are sojourning in India could and should help change or modify these laws. Indian students should be encouraged to go to America for their higher education.

The American system of education is much better than that which prevails in India and which only fits the students for routine desk work. It has a freer interplay of ideas between the teacher and the students. And it brings out the best in every student and fits him for taking his place in a democratic world. One great contribution that the American educational system could make to India is teaching the "dignity of labour." There is in America no snobbery or looking down on a poor student who has to work his way through college. On the contrary, he is praised and honoured for it. (A system of self-help is being tried in some American-managed Indian colleges, but it is not quite the success that it is in America.) India has a lot to learn from America's realistic outlook, her attitude towards progress and her giving an opportunity for everyone to rise or to develop towards self-realisation. India, on the other hand, has all her vast experience to give in exchange for speed and scientific research.

But India and America have much in common. They are both great countries of vast distances, varied climates and equally varied racial characteristics. The peoples of both countries have an intense

love for democracy and independence. It begins to look as if India is on her way to getting her independence and she needs America's help more than ever to get firmly established and to make a success of it. America can help India organise herself. India is composed of four hundred million individuals who have no idea of co-operation. Team work, as we understand it in the West, is completely foreign to Indian ideas.

Americans find it extremely difficult to understand the caste system in India. One of their stock phrases is "How can India expect to get her independence as long as she has the caste system?" Every country since the dawn of creation has had and still has a caste system, though not always called by that name. It is known in the West as "colour prejudice" or "racial prejudice." The Rev. J. C. Heinrich in his book, *The Psychology of a Suppressed People*, says, in writing on untouchability in India, "The problem has striking parallels to the Negro problem in the United States."

At present there is no central bureau which can arrange for exchange professorships. Several in America would be only too glad of the chance to spend a few years in India. The same could be said of several men who are teaching in India. As there is Yale in China, if we could have a Harvard or a Columbia in India, it would be very good for both countries. An exchange of cultures is greatly needed. More good-will missions are also needed between America and India.

It would also help Indo-American amity if a society could be started in India from among those who have already been educated in America, such as Sir Jehangir Ghandy, Dr. Ambedkar and a host of others who are now in influential positions in India. That society should maintain an agency to supply information to all students who want to go to America, to help them get there and get located. Most Indian students do not know that it is possible to work one's way through college in America. All that it needs is a certain amount of adventurous spirit, plus the passage money, and a certain amount to be shown at the port of entry, with a letter from an American University or College to say the student will be admitted. Societies like the Traveller's Aid; the Y. M. C. A. Branch of Friendly Relations among Foreign Students and several other societies would be there to welcome every new student entering the States. The British Government is now maintaining Professor Sundaram in America to do this type of work; but how long they will keep it up is unpredictable. Last, but not least, the vast number of Indians now domiciled in the United States could give a great amount of help to Indian students who wish to go there for further study. This group could also be of immense value in promoting Indo-American amity.

Some years ago King Carol told

Bruce Lockhart how he had selected fourteen of the brightest young men in Rumania for training for government office. Seven he sent to England and seven to America to study the economic and political systems in those countries.

"The seven who went to England were very smart," said Carol, "and they all have now important posts in Bucharest."

"What about the seven you sent to America?" asked Lockhart.

"They were even smarter," said the King. "They stayed there."

JUDITH AMES APPASAMY

GRAMSEVIKAS

Brigadier F. L. Brayne wrote convincingly in our June issue on the key importance of India's womenfolk in any plan for the permanent amelioration of the Indian villages. Some of the steps already being taken to mobilise rural woman power for village uplift are outlined in a most interesting account of the work of the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust which appears in the May 15th News Letter—Foreign Department, of the All-India Congress Committee.

Poverty-stricken India, moved to its depths by Shrimati Kasturba Gandhi's death in prison in February 1944, contributed within a year, by popular subscription, Rs. 12,500,000 for this Trust. Its work is conducted mainly by women, from its organising secretary, Shrimati Sucheta Kripalani, down through provincial and district agents to the field workers, who are all literate rural women, known as *gramsevikas*. These last, all thoroughly trained by the Trust as general social workers and some trained in addition as midwives, nurses, teachers or craft experts, are expected to serve in the villages for at least three years after completing their training, taking with them "a new ideology and a fresh outlook on life." They will, among other things, encourage recognition of the dignity of honest labour of whatever type by doing all work, even scavenging, which should do more to weaken the curse of untouchability than any amount of inveighing against it.

So vast a project, embracing all India in its scope, has taken a remarkably short time to get under way. Training has already begun and by mid-July, it is promised, 50 trained workers will be ready to start field work centres in the villages, to be followed within a year by 300 more. A drop in the bucket in comparison with India's 700,000 villages? Perhaps, but, as Thoreau wrote, "It matters not how small the beginning may seem to be, what is once well done is done forever." We are very hopeful for this constructive effort on right lines.

E. M. H.

DESPOTISM, DEMOCRACY AND VALUE THEORY

[**Dr. William H. Roberts** of the University of Wisconsin, U. S. A., writes here of the perversion of values that lies behind despotisms and of the direct dependence of right conditions on right ideologies.—ED.]

Dive bombers, monstrous reptilian tanks, the triumphs of a diplomacy rarely if ever matched in history for audacity, cynicism and ferocity have awakened men and women everywhere to a truth that preachers and philosophers have long proclaimed but to which others have been unwilling to listen. Ideas matter. Scarcely anything else matters so much. Men's actions and their thoughts form a single fabric. States, forms of government, national and international policies all develop from ideas in men's minds. No issue before us today is of more vital and practical import than how we shall *think* about "good" and "evil," "right" and "wrong," "beauty," "justice,"—in a word, about values.

German mothers, we have been told, murmured to their babies, "You were born to die for the Fuehrer." Little boys in Italy learned that they must train themselves to be sharp daggers against the enemies of their country. Their elders were reminded almost daily that the whole duty and virtue of the citizen is to obey, to work and to fight. Russian youth must consecrate every material and spiritual resource to the cause of the proletarian revolution. Fascism, Nazism and Communism agree in affirming the reality of something supremely "good" that is other than the happiness of individual men, women, and children.

Despotisms, if they are to endure beyond the lifetime of an individual despot or to achieve any measure of stability, must establish themselves upon some more adequate foundation than merely external force. To cement a people into a solid yet elastic block, the wills of individuals must be captured and dominated by a convincing and commanding ideology. In the words of Rousseau, power must be transformed into right.

That is to say that despotisms must develop their distinctive philosophies of value. Values that will serve their purpose must be "absolute" in the sense that they are superior to any weighing of human happiness or misery, "relative" in that they owe their very being to the creative word of human authority. Right and wrong, justice and injustice, even truth and falsehood, beauty and ugliness, are what Authority decrees they shall be. And they are what they are *because* Authority decrees it so, and because Authority can support its decrees.

Resistance to despotism must also base itself upon a philosophy of values. Free peoples, too, must have causes to serve before all others, for which they can be certain it is reasonable to toil, to sacrifice, and, if the need arises, to die. The thought of free peoples exactly reverses, though, the philosophy of despotism. The free peoples find values relative at the very point at which the despotisms assert they are absolute, and absolute where the despotisms claim they are relative.

Ruin and agony, the philosophies of freedom affirm, invalidate any alleged "right." Nothing can be "right" that fills the world with hatred, fear, devastation and death. Nothing can be "good" that fails to provide for the happiness of individual men, women and children. Yet "right" and "good" *are* absolute in the sense that they belong to an order of fact. That is an order we are powerless to change. The conditions for human well-being are embedded in the tissues of human bodies, the texture of human souls. They are a part of the universe. No human authority can create or destroy them. The highest achievement of the human intellect is to *discover* laws that no human will, individual or collective, is capable of enacting.

To affirm that some actions are "right" and that we "ought" to do them, though they should bring lasting and uncompensated misery on all mankind, that other actions are "wrong" and we "ought not" to do them, though they should offer the only possible escape for the whole human race from utter and hopeless ruin is to provide despotism with the finest of possible foundations. It is like signing a blank cheque. All that remains is for the despot of the hour to fill in the blanks. In the past we have seen men honouring the demand to break faith with heretics, to burn scholars who held views of the Trinity at variance with their own, or to support every policy of their country "right or wrong." What despots of our own day demanded we have already noted.

Forms of government and philosophies of value exhibit a parallelism that deserves more careful exploration than it has yet, so far as I know, received. The ways of thinking that gave rise to the struggles for political liberty in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were also ways of thinking about values. The year 1789 saw the inauguration of George Washington as the first President of the U. S. A. and the beginning of the French Revolution. It saw also the appearance of Bentham's *Principles of Morals and of Legislation*. The conjunction of such events is certainly more than accidental.

The effect of Bentham's work was to overthrow moral absolutism as completely as France overthrew the rule of king and nobles, and to re-establish the moral order upon a basis that it seems scarcely an exaggeration to describe as constitutional democracy. The people of the United States declared in the

preamble to their Constitution their intention "to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to (themselves) and (their) posterity." In just such a spirit Bentham insisted that the one reasonable purpose of intelligent human beings was to enjoy as large a surplus as possible of pleasures over pains. The aim of all government must be "the greatest happiness of the greatest number." Bentham demanded that every claim to recognition as a value must pass the test of conformity to this fundamental Utilitarian doctrine.

In England Reform Bills in 1832, 1867, and 1884 broke the hold of the upper classes upon Parliament and extended suffrage to the masses. In 1863 John Stuart Mill's eloquent *Utilitarianism*, recorded a similar democratization of value theory. The proof that anything is desir*able*, he urged, is the fact that it is desir*ed*. Values thus became dependent for their office and their dignity upon popular suffrage.

Complete democracy, it seems, was a little too drastic for even so staunch a liberal. In a famous passage he added still another scale to those that Bentham had proposed for the rating of pleasures. He called it "height." The basis for a choice of the "higher" grade of life, with its delicate and precarious satisfactions in preference to the more obvious, intense and readily available gratifications of the desires we share with animals, he found in "a sense of dignity, which is so essential a part of the happiness of those in whom it is strong that nothing which conflicts with it would be otherwise than momentarily an object of desire." That is where we would expect an English gentleman of his time to find it.

The restriction of the veto power of the House of Lords by the Parliament Act of 1911 removed the last constitutional check upon the will of the people. The political power of the upper classes was broken. A deep respect for tradition, strong common-sense, and a deeply rooted distrust of theories not tested in practice prevented the elected representatives of the people, it is true, from embarking upon violently radical programmes. Even so, the early years of the twentieth century saw a series of acts that summed up to very little less than revolution.

In Professor Perry's massive *General Theory of Value* (1926) we see the complete democratization of values. It may even be their reduction to downright anarchy. "Any object of any interest," Professor Perry argued, must be recognized as a value.

In some very important respects democracy, whether in government or in value theory, has proved bitterly disappointing. Dissonances shatter the harmonies of the *Magnificat*. The martial rhythm of *Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité* limps. The casting down of the mighty from their

seats has not stopped with the beheading of kings and the shooting of a czar. Too often it has meant the casting down within men's minds of rules, obligations, loyalties and ideals that have a right to rule. The "humble," once exalted, have proved in many cases at least as greedy, cruel and stupid as the "mighty" they have displaced. Liberty, lacking an inner sense of obligation, has degenerated into irresponsibility and surrender to the crudest impulses. Equality has too often come to mean in actual practice the reduction of all social relationships to the lowest common denominator, the debasing and vulgarization of politics, the press, literature, art and religion. The magnificent ideal of fraternity we have seen split into class and racial divisions with their jealousies, conflicts, injuries, reprisals and enduring feuds.

Whereas the kings claimed, and doubtless believed, that they ruled by divine right, the new despots acknowledge nothing higher than their own wills. From the naked assertion of a dictator's will, supported by tanks and planes, there can be no appeal to any sovereign right or justice. Even truth is reduced to expediency; and expediency is defined by the prevailing aim of the Nazi, Fascist, or Communist state or party.

Pragmatism—made in America—is thus made an instrument of despotism! This ought not to surprise us. Nor is the use made of America's most distinctive contribution to philosophy one of which we have any right to complain. We have repudiated every outward authority to which men might appeal against oppression. Within there are no certainties. Just when science has completed the arming of men for wholesale slaughter, as Prof. Mortimer J. Adler penetratingly observed in "This Pre-War Generation" (*Harper's Magazine*, October 1940) a philosophy purporting to be scientific has all but disarmed them morally.

The re-establishment of despotism, like the great liberal movements we have reviewed, has its parallel in value theory. The absolutism of "good" and "bad," of "right" and "wrong," of "ought" and "ought not," that we thought as surely dead and buried as political absolutism, comes to the front again in the work of such writers as G. E. Moore, W. D. Ross, and Nicolai Hartmann. In his brilliant little volume, *Principia Ethica* (1903), G. E. Moore argues that goodness is a quality as impossible to define but as readily and unmistakably recognizable as the colour yellow. Like a simple elementary colour it cannot be described in terms of anything but itself. Ross in *The Right and the Good* and *Foundation of Ethics* found it easy enough to show "right" and "ought" as undefinable as "good." Hartmann in his *Ethics* bases an elaborate analysis of values on the oracular pronouncements of "the value consciousness" that in its field seems as authoritative and as

unassailable by any criticism as Nazi dogma. In religion, finally, Karl Barth has won many followers throughout the Protestant world in his revolt against Liberalism or Modernism. In his teaching the Word of God is utterly incomprehensible by "the natural man." God's ways are basically different from man's. It is scarcely unfair to ask whether Barth's God is not suspiciously like Hitler.

Without values that are absolute there can be no freedom. The paradox vanishes when we reflect that the authority of truth is the only authority that can never become despotic. It is when it is most compelling that it is most freely accepted. Its power has its source in "the consent of the governed." Truth alone can fully accomplish what Rousseau made it plain that every ruler must undertake, if he would make his sovereignty secure. Truth alone can fully transform power into right. It is the quality of truth that makes God more than a cosmic Hitler.

If we are to combat the despotisms of our day, we must be able to oppose to them values that are true, practices that are right, relationships and agreements that are just. They must be such that they compel acceptance—willing acceptance—by all who confront them, without evasions or distortions. In that sense they must be themselves facts. They must have the power to coerce experience.

The all-important question is where we shall locate our absolutes. To misplace them, to insist that "good" and "right" and "justice" have no necessary relationship to human well-being is to rationalize despotism and to justify the sacrifice of human victims to the modern Molochs.

The first step towards a true and adequate theory of values, on which we can base first successful resistance to the present forms of despotism and then constructive effort, is to acknowledge that all values are, and must be, relevant to some factor or factors of human experience. All values are *for* conscious beings capable of happiness and misery. Were there no such experiences as happiness or misery, and individuals to live through them, there could be no values. Nothing would be worse or better than anything else.

Satisfaction and disappointment, happiness and misery, add a new dimension to consciousness, as stereoscopic lenses add depth to photographs or moving-pictures. In times of extreme suffering or exhaustion things may lose their power either to hurt or to please us. When that happens, our world loses its depth. Its values flatten out into mere facts. If life and consciousness were no more than awareness of facts, we might register the facts as faithfully as a mirror reflects the objects in front of it; but we should be as indifferent to them as mirrors are.

The good is *our* good. Actions are right or wrong, because they result in the happiness or misery of

individual men, women, or children. Justice is what Nietzsche so magnificently called it, "Love with seeing eyes." National greatness cannot be founded on the enslavement, the degradation, or the misery of any people.

Important as it is to acknowledge the relevance of all values to human needs, desires and capacities, it is at least as important to discern and to acknowledge the "absolute" aspects of values, which, rather than the relative, stand in need of emphasis today. To forget that our needs, desires and capacities, together with the objects toward which they are oriented, belong to the order of reality is to collapse into anarchy. And the end of anarchy is slavery to the worshippers of Moloch.

Behind embattled armies, navies and air squadrons, as Hegel pointed out a little more than a hundred years ago, ideas and ideals are in conflict. The task of philosophers today is fully as important as the building of ships, airplanes, or machine-guns. That task is to discover and to describe in detail the bearings of goodness, justice and beauty upon human happiness and welfare in a world that is filled with appalling dangers but also with glorious possibilities.

WILLIAM H. ROBERTS

PURPOSEFUL SACRIFICES

A virile dynamic of peace is preached by Mr. Lewis Mumford in his recently published book, *Values for Survival*. Saving civilisation, he points out, is not a once-for-all feat. We have to be ready to save it "every twenty minutes if necessary." But is our self-indulgent age ready, without the spur of immediate danger, for the "rational inhibitions and purposeful sacrifices" which he regards as necessary to survival?

A life sacrificed at the right moment is a life well spent, while a life too carefully hoarded, too ignominiously preserved, may be a life utterly wasted.

Mr. Mumford has slight patience with the liberal's pride in not being "carried away by his emotions." He should "rather be a little alarmed because he often has no emotions that could, under any conceivable circumstances, carry him away."

POETRY IN INDIA

[**Dr. C. Kunhan Raja** of the Madras University is both a Sanskrit scholar and a distinguished writer in modern Malayalam. He is therefore doubly qualified to deal with the subject which he discusses in this essay, parts of which formed a talk given from the Madras Centre of the All-India Radio.—ED.]

The literature of India has lived through a period as long as is allowed to human civilisation itself. If the Greeks of the time when the Homeric poems were composed had known of Sanskrit literature (the oldest in India) they would have described it as of extreme antiquity, millenniums old. The still older civilisations of Babylon and Egypt too would have spoken of it as an elder literature. Even the most cautious student of the Indian literatures is willing to concede to the Vedas (the earliest phase of Sanskrit literature) an antiquity of at least five thousand years and to credit Indian literature with a continuous life of luxuriant growth over this vast period. Enthusiasts go to the extent of claiming for it a minimum of three times that period.

And of the Vedas the collection of hymns called the *Rigveda* is supposed to be the earliest. These hymns, which are available only in fragments, are songs addressed to the various gods, extolling their valour, describing their heroic deeds, praising their personal beauty, revealing the fraternal communion between man and gods, acknowledging man's gratitude to the gods for their help and guidance in life and advocating faith in and devotion to them for a happy life on earth and a hopeful future after death. There are, besides, Nature poems, describing the beauty of the dawn, the grandeur of the mighty rivers, the terrors of the storm and of the monsoon rains, the serene calm and quiet of the starry nights, the brilliant sun and the charming moon. There are also secular poems describing the simple folk with their natural foibles and the exalted wisdom of the saints, marriage and funeral ceremonies, the various seasonal festivals and religious rites, wars and victories and the coronation of kings.

From the purely literary point of view, these poems compare well with any specimen of literary art. And I am afraid that no later poet in Sanskrit itself or in any other Indian language has surpassed the Vedic poets in beauty of language, majesty of thought and variety of theme.

If we take into account only the actual literature now available to us in Sanskrit, there is a wide gap between this ancient Vedic literature and the earliest specimens of the later "Classical Sanskrit" literature. The dramatists like Bhasa and Kalidasa, the still earlier writers of epics like Vyasa and Valmiki, are by

common consent assigned to the few centuries preceding the Christian era. But from grammarians like Panini and Patanjali, who flourished about the same time, we understand that during this long period of apparent blankness, there must have flourished a rich literature in Sanskrit. From the fifth century B. C., which may safely be considered the time of the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana*, the development of Sanskrit literature has been unbroken; and Sanskrit continues even today as a living language with a growing literature.

Until the modern Indian languages, both in the North and in the South, began to evolve literary forms, Sanskrit was the sole medium for the expression of the intellect and imagination of India. About the same time that in Europe the various modern languages began to evolve their own literatures, replacing Greek and Latin, a similar phenomenon appeared in India also. The poetic art of India gradually found expression through the various regional languages. While some of these changed the form and structure of Sanskrit, Sanskrit in its turn moulded their content. Sanskrit served as their common root and foundation, supplying the essentials of higher thought, holding up ideals of nobler life, and setting standards of good taste and beauty of form in arts and letters.

When the modern literatures of India developed, they adapted and assimilated what was best in Sanskrit literature. All the epics and the other forms of poetry in Sanskrit were introduced into the later literatures, either as translations or as close adaptations. There is no Indian literature without its *Mahabharata* and its *Ramayana*. Sanskrit also held together these various languages as a single harmonious cultural unit, resisting and arresting the tendencies of disruption that their differences in language form made possible. Thus Sanskrit and the modern Indian languages flourished as mutually complementary.

The Indian literatures are unique not only in their unbroken duration. What is accepted as holding the first rank in poetry, in point both of chronology and of artistic excellence, namely, the *Ramayana* of Valmiki, is double the size of Homer's two epics put together. The *Mahabharata* is a little over four times the size of the *Ramayana*. All the epic poems in the European languages taken together may be only as long as this one grand epic of India. And the Indian literatures have many epics twice the size of the complete works of Homer. From the allusions in extant Sanskrit literature, one knows that what we have inherited is only a very small part of what must have been, though even this small portion bulks larger than anything available in other languages, not excluding the European.

There are innumerable shorter epic poems which challenge *Paradise Lost* in majesty of style and grandeur of conception. The *Kiratarjuniya*

of Bharavi, the *Sisupalavadha* of Magha and the *Naishadhiyacharita* of Sri Harsha, to say nothing of the epics of Kalidas, namely, the *Raghuvamsa* and the *Kumarasambhava*, belong to this class.

There are dramas that even surpass, in artistic beauty and workmanship and in emotional appeal, the plays of Shakespeare and of Schiller. I may mention as samples of good dramas, the *Sakuntala* of Kalidas, the *Uttararamacharita* of Bhavabhuti, the *Nagananda* of Harsha, the *Veni-Samhara* of Narayana, the *Mudrarakshasa* of Visakhadatta and the *Mricchakatika* of Sudraka.

A love lyric like the *Amaru Sataka* reveals an art that has no parallel in any other literature, constructed as that poem is out of material that, in the hands of any inferior craftsman, would have turned out to be the most revolting obscenity. In the *Gita-Govinda* of Jayadeva, what in normal life appears as crude physical passion becomes the deepest devotion to the Divine.

I have pointed out only a few of the many instances in which artistic talent has worked wonders unimaginable in any other literature. Folklore and fairy-tales, legends and chronicles of kings and national heroes, fascinating narratives of historical events, charming fables that convey elevating ethical concepts, all these and various other types find a place in the different kinds of literature in the Indian languages.

Apart from stories and historical narratives, Sanskrit prose of the most polished type forms the medium for some of the most abstruse discussions on very profound philosophical problems. Even some of the metrical texts dealing with technical subjects, like the *Ashtangahridaya* on Medicine and the *Sangitaraja* on Music serve also as outstanding specimens of good poetry, with their faultless diction, their chaste language, their beautiful presentation and their occasional flashes of imagination illuminating the dark regions of science, their variety of metres and their general elegance of style. Even a prose work like the *Prakriyasarvasva* on Grammar becomes more interesting than a sensational novel. The limit between prose and poetry, between science and literary art, is undefinable in Sanskrit. Works on science are as charming as the best art and the poems are as instructive and illuminating as a work on science. Some of the literary forms in the languages of the world can be traced to India; I mean the story literature.

The presentation of the beauty of Nature is a feature for which the Indian literatures are unique. In the classical literatures of Europe, one finds less appreciation of the beauty of Nature. But in India, joy and sorrow, laughter and tears, love and jealousy, feeling and emotion, and every such feature that characterises human life, were found to exist even in "inanimate" Nature. The close bond between

animate and inanimate life was always a reality to the Indian poets. Life permeating the inanimate objects, the Divine permeating the worldly and the human—this has been the philosophy of the poets of India from the very beginning. And this philosophy inspires the poets of India even at the present day.

It is difficult, if not impossible, to name another literature that can, so fully as the Indian literatures, satisfy the needs of humanity with its various tastes and aptitudes. Other literatures rose to prominence at a particular stage in the evolution of a civilisation and later lapsed into disuse. We can mark clearly the chronological limits of the great literatures of the past in Europe, like the Greek and the Latin. Of the literary achievements of the Babylonians and the ancient Egyptians, only very scanty material is available. But the Indian literatures remain as young as in their beginning, while many others have lapsed into disuse and innumerable fresh literatures have come up and are flourishing. Thus Indian literatures have the full maturity of the oldest literature of the world and also the vigour and the freshness of the youngest.

Indian civilisation has passed through various stages, and Sanskrit has adapted itself and remained new and ever modern through them all. The most abstract truth of the profoundest philosophy and the simplest facts of Nature like the flowers in the fields; the deepest religious austerity and service to God and the most commonplace physical passion; the saints in the remotest forest settlements and the voluptuous citizens given to material pleasures; the noblest kings and the humblest peasants; the chaste women of virtuous homes and the shameless harlots of the city streets—these and a host of other contradictions in the world find themselves blended harmoniously in Indian poetry.

Sanskrit gradually became more especially a medium for the intellectual activity of India, and India's poetic genius found its expression more and more through the various modern languages. The modern languages did not develop their scientific and technical sides, which were left to Sanskrit. On the literary side, the modern languages continued the Sanskrit tradition, kept up its high standards and developed their own individualities to satisfy the different regional necessities. They served the same art, presented in different language forms, exhibiting the same genius and the same culture. What is true of Sanskrit is true of all Indian literatures; and, as art, Sanskrit and the modern literatures in India are convertible terms.

In Europe the literary traditions of Greek and Latin came to an end in the early centuries of the Christian era and it was not till nearly a thousand years after that the renaissance movement started and the literary traditions of the modern languages, like Italian and French, had their

beginning under the inspiration of the revived classical art. In India, on the contrary, there was no such break between the Sanskrit traditions and the traditions of the modern literatures. The development of Indian literature is like a banyan tree, branching off in various directions, and each such new branch sending down fresh roots which ultimately form new trunks. The entire growth has an ultimate unity and continuity and, at the same time, each new trunk formed during the course of this expansion has its own individuality. The primary stem continues and all the new stems are connected with it.

It is too often remarked about the Indian literatures that their art is standardised, that they are overburdened with didacticism in handling themes, and that there is an inflexible rigidity and a monotony in language and metre. I have also heard it said that there is little of real human interest in Indian poetry. The prominence given to kings and to court life is another feature of which much is made as a limitation of Indian poetry. But one should realise that art was a living force when Indians had a real national life of their own. Art has ceased to give an awakening to man, and we have at present only the standards of art and not art itself. Thus what is standardised is our own notions of ancient Indian art. But the art itself was never standardised. Through contact with the ancient Indian literatures, Indians' æsthetic sense will one day be truly awakened, instead of being given only an occasional shake, as at present, through the impact of foreign art, which Indians do not really understand. And when, with that reawakened æsthetic sense, Indians start studying the art of ancient India, then will they realise and foreigners understand that ancient Indian art was and can in future be as much a force to move the hearts of men as any other literature in the world.

The apparent didacticism of the Indian literatures shows only the intellectual eminence of the average Indian in ancient times. Themes for art can be selected from any field that is known to man ; there is no theme which in itself is unfit for art. Anything becomes art when it is given an artistic form. If the hills and the dales, the lakes and the rivers, the creepers and the flowers, the birds and the beasts, the innocent and rustic life of the villages and the revelries of the cities, the poverty of the cottage and the luxury of the palace, which all come within the everyday experience of man, can serve as themes for high-class poetry, there is no reason why an artist shall not select his theme from philosophy or grammar, which were once equally familiar to the average citizen. Erudition may not be art ; but erudition is not destructive of art either. The inability of the present generation to understand and to appreciate art built on the foundations of erudition, alongside

of Nature and man's simple life, only shows the depths to which modern Indians have fallen in their intellectual poverty.

Kings and life in royal courts did form an important part in the poetic art of ancient India, but if Indian literary art is to be condemned on this score, the entire classical literature of Europe will have to be discarded and the best modern European literatures must be thrown away. The fact is that kings are as much human beings as any other men. They too have life and feelings and emotions. But there is something unique in Indian poetry. To the poets of India, the kings were not merely themes for their poetry and patrons for their art; many kings were the poet's fellow-craftsmen. In the Indian literatures, both ancient and modern, kings have been some of the best poets of the country.

In India there was never a conflict between the three rival camps of poets, philosophers and religious devotees. From the earliest times there has been in India a synthesis of intellect, imagination and religion. They call it the *Sat-Chit-Ananda* equation. The apparent didacticism or over-intellectualism noticed in Indian poetry and drama is really a wider synthesis in art, equating Religion or Truth (*Sat*) and Intellect (*Chit*) with beauty (*Ananda*).

To sum up, then, in variety of type, in the number of specimens in each variety and in the artistic qualities of these specimens, the poetry of India can stand comparison with that in any language, ancient or modern. The poetic treasures of India form a large part of the literary wealth of the world. Poetry has prospered in India. It continues strong. It will thrive and flourish in the future.

C. KUNHAN RAJA

NEW BOOKS AND OLD

"'TIS ADONAIS CALLS!" *

I think I shall be among the English Poets after my death.

(Keats, October 1818)

Hobbs hints blue—straight he turtle eats:
Nobbs prints blue—claret crowns his cup:
Nokes outdares Stokes in azure feats,—
Both gorge. Who fished the murex up?
What porridge had John Keats?
("Popularity," Robert Browning, *c.* 1850)

If one English poet might be recalled to-day from the dead to continue the work which he left unfinished on earth, it is probable the crown of his country's desire would be set on the head of John Keats.

(Robert Bridges, 1895)

In 1829, when the question of a biography was broached to her, Fanny Brawne wrote, "I fear the kindest act would be to let him rest forever in the obscurity to which unhappy circumstances have condemned him." Influenced perhaps by the poet's last despairing request that upon his grave should be inscribed, "Here lies one whose name is writ in water," she exaggerated the world's neglect. As poet, Keats already had enough reputation to warrant that very year the issue of a Galignani edition in Paris, and as man, a certain notoriety; a notoriety fostered by the preface to *Adonais*, in its turn brought to public notice by Shelley's violent death at sea and by the fashionable Byron's comment in *Don Juan*:—

John Keats, who was killed by one critique,
Just as he really promised something great,
If not intelligible, without Greek,
Contrived to talk about the gods of late,
Much as they might have been supposed to speak.
Poor fellow! his was an untoward fate;
'Tis strange the mind, that very fiery particle,
Should let itself be snuffed out by an article.

This concept of Keats as a weak-kneed youth so affected by an attack in the *Quarterly* that it caused his death crystallised in a phrase common among shallow-pated tourists to Rome who would guffaw over the sad inscription and say, "Yes, in milk-and-water." Those tourists were, however, already visiting the grave on the *Monte Testaccio*. But over the years, with the avowed admiration of great men, with poets working in a Keatsian mode far removed from the more rudely muscular rime of Byron, and with the publication of *The Life and Letters* in 1848, Keats's just fame grew: by the end of the century he was in a high niche of fame, though yet to be fully accepted as thinker, philosopher.

All this, the growing reputation, the change in public taste, has been worked out by Mr. Ford thoroughly and well; carefully documented, though with none of the rather heavy-handed manner of much North American scholarship. Side by side, in admirable proportion, Mr. Ford has pointed to the influence of Keats on Victorian poets who hinted blue, printed blue, using, though with a cunning less

**Keats and the Victorians. A Study of His Influence and Rise to Fame: 1821-1895.* By GEORGE H. FORD. (Yale University Press, New Haven, Conn.; Humphrey Milford, Oxford University Press, London. 20*s.*)

subtle, the splendid Tyrian purple, product of that mollusc, the murex, which Browning so dramatically and happily pictured him as fishing up. Tennyson, the idol of mid-Victorians, though coming comparatively late to his turtle and claret, benefited most in a worldly sense:—

> There is the extract, flasked and fine,
> And priced and saleable at last!

Browning, a sincere lover of Keats though largely divergent in his own work, paid in "Popularity" the greatest tribute to Keats; and Arnold, though he qualified praise, influenced the trend of opinion; but it was the poems of Tennyson, of Swinburne, of the Pre-Raphaelites and especially of Dante Gabriel Rossetti, that prepared the ground for whole-hearted acceptance of Keats: not by virtue of his promise, but in achievement. Mr. Ford in his book puts these men clearly before us in neat strokes of character; the ambitious, touchy Tennyson; the word-intoxicated Swinburne; the robust Morris; Rossetti, violent, intense; and the fastidious-mannered Arnold, that inhibited poet who gave us so little of his finest.

To one poet, however, the first to show the direct influence of Keats, Mr. Ford does not, to my mind, do justice; accusing Thomas Hood of direct plagiarism and giving him far less than his due as a serious poet. As to the sin of conscious plagiarism: Hood, as brother-in-law to Reynolds, Keats's friend, was in a position to know the poems, published and unpublished, but that very connection would have prevented direct theft; Keats's friends were keenly jealous for his reputation. The truth surely is that Hood, a strong admirer of Keats, was by nature of his peculiar genius strongly imitative and, moreover, wrote the bulk of his serious verse at a time of life when much poetry derives from reverent reading. In his one volume of collected serious verse, *The Plea of the Midsummer Fairies*, we have a choice of themes, a very use of titles which lay Hood open to this charge of plagiarism so naïvely as to disarm suspicion; "To Fancy," "Sonnet written in a volume of Shakespeare," "Ode to the Moon," "Ode to Melancholy," "Autumn," and "Ruth," the last poem actually commencing with the lines, "She stood breast high amid the corn." All this was surely rather a loving corollary to Keats than conscious plagiarism. Then as to the quality of the work: Mr. Ford writes,

> Indeed we wonder whether, except in his thoroughly individual "Song of the Shirt" and such pieces, Hood was not usually on the wrong track in his serious verse.

Is "Eugene Aram," so grimly powerful, so different in conception and artistry, to be dismissed under the heading of "such pieces"? And much of the early minor verse shows, not only that technical mastery evident in all Hood's work, but a delicate fancy and an ability to convey "atmosphere." There are lapses in language, breaches of word-taste, but are they not to be found in the poems of his master, a far greater man? No, Mr. Ford does less than justice to Thomas Hood's serious verse, and here he is not alone: little attention has been paid to it either by contemporary readers or by posterity. The bulk of *The Plea of the Midsummer Fairies* lay upon the publisher's shelf until Hood bought it up "to save it from the butter shops."

A poet Mr. Ford has only mentioned in passing, one of the most richly lyrical

of the century and a highly individual member of the Pre-Raphaelite group, is Christina Rossetti. Surely in the splendid second stanza of her poem, "A Birthday," to give but one example, she hints blue, prints blue:—

> Raise me a dais of silk and down;
> Hang it with vair and purple dyes;
> Carve it in doves, and pomegranates,
> And peacocks with a hundred eyes;
> Work it in gold and silver grapes,
> In leaves and silver fleur-de-lys;
> Because the birthday of my life
> Is come, my love is come to me.

But Mr. Ford's book is so evocative, so stimulating to research, that perhaps the very omissions one finds are a tribute to his general success.

"I think I shall be among the English Poets after my death." That assurance of fame expressed in private to a brother was early justified in a different sense, literally borne out in scarcely one generation from Keats himself when in the thirties a ferment began to work at Cambridge, stimulating the young Tennyson, Richard Monckton Milnes, his future biographer, and other "Apostles," as the group significantly called themselves: Keats was among the English poets in the flesh, a potent influence, a lively ghost, a richly powerful touchstone.

DOROTHY HEWLETT

Gandhi: World Citizen. By MURIEL LESTER. (Kitab Mahal, Allahabad. Rs. 5/8)

Miss Lester was Gandhiji's hostess in London and has been his guest several times in India. In this small book of about two hundred pages she has skilfully presented a very comprehensive picture of Gandhiji.

> His frugality plus his practice of the Presence of God bring him serenity; maintain his breathing in its natural rhythm, this keeps the heart contentedly and efficiently at its appointed task of pumping blood all over the body: anxiety, fears and resentment do not impede its flow; there is none of that jerkiness that comes from relying always on oneself, or on machines."

In the first half of the book we are given this intimate picture of Gandhiji and by interesting anecdote and incident we are shown how, during his life in South Africa and in England as well as in India, he developed, matured and gave expression to his ideas on such subjects as Non-Violence, Truth, Non-Theft and Prayer, and his attitude to Women, the Empire, Prohibition and Animals.

The second half of the book is a chronological record of Gandhiji's public life from his early years in England and South Africa to the ending of his fast in prison in 1943. It is a record of his work not only for Indian freedom but also for world freedom. The story of his political life, as is well known, is no less the story of his spiritual search. He wrote:—

> Satyagraha, of which civil disobedience is but a part, is to me the universal law of life. Satya, in truth, is my God. I can only search Him through non-violence and in no other way. And the freedom of my country, as of the world, is surely included in the search for Truth....I have entered the political life in pursuit of this search.

Miss Lester's book is illustrated with photographs and drawings which the publishers describe as "rare pictures not yet imported into India."

IRENE R. RAY

Lychgate: The Entrance to the Path. By Air Chief Marshal Lord Dowding. (Rider and Co., London. 7*s.* 6*d.*)

The writer's moral courage and sincerity are beyond praise. But the impartial reader cannot fail to see how strong a part the will to believe plays in Lord Dowding's conviction that he is in objective communication, through a non-professional medium, with his long-dead wife and with dead friends old and new. For all his modesty and open-mindedness on many points, he seems to have a closed mind as to that.

Lord Dowding admits that death does not confer all knowledge, that after-death conditions are largely subjective creations, that there are "astonishing divergences in the teaching which is given to different circles by entities claiming equal authority," and that the wisdom of the East has much to teach; but he remains unshaken in his faith that some of the communications which he has received, for all their Christian bias, are trustworthy. Some of the "communications" are of high tone and beautifully phrased, but none are finer, surely, than a pure-minded medium might draw unwittingly from his own soul.

Fortunately, the fact of the survival of the consciousness after bodily death rests on no such slender evidence as objective communication with the spirits of the dead. The conviction is innate in all who have not lent an ear to the sophistries of materialism and is borne out by the evidence of every living man who has reached the heights of knowledge.

Lord Dowding accepts Karma and Reincarnation. He has contacted genuine Theosophy and been impressed by Mme. Blavatsky's *Isis Unveiled* and *The Secret Doctrine*, though he seems regrettably to find more congenial the psychic teachings of pseudo-Theosophy, which fall in better with his preconceptions. His common-sense rebels against some of their extravagances but he swallows others no less fantastic.

Lord Dowding accepts the assurance, so subtly flattering, that he is helping the war dead reorient themselves—a service surely as gratuitous as the "*mission civilisatrice*" which stood godfather to Imperialism—and that he is busily labouring philanthropically during the hours of sleep, but he ingenuously admits knowing nothing of the latter and remembering quite different dreams!

He is fortunately not mediumistic himself and admits dangers in indiscriminate mediumship but he encourages home circles, failing to see mediumistic passivity, however developed, as psychopathic. Deliberate malefactors may be less dangerous than men of good-will ignorant of the forces they invoke and of the risks they invite others to share. If, through Lord Dowding's efforts, even a few unfortunates among the war dead learn the way to objective communication and vicarious gratification through the living, he will have done them and their victims a lasting injury that not all his heroism in the Battle of Britain, not all the comfort that he offers the survivors, from page and lecture platform, can offset.

The title is a gruesome but significant choice, however likely the subtitle to mislead the uninformed aspirant to the spiritual. For the Path in universal

symbolism is the Path to Life, whereas the path to which a lychgate leads is that by which the dead are carried to the grave.

E. M. HOUGH

Tales from Gogol. Translated by ROSA PORTNOVA. (Sylvan Press, London. 10*s.* 6*d.*)

Towards the end of the most farcical of these six tales the narrator remarks, "The world is full of absolute nonsense" and later qualifies the statement by asking "What happening is without some absurdity?" Nonsense is the extreme form of liberation from a world of dead commonplace. In it imagination defies the actuality that would subdue it. There is, of course, a pure nonsense which is meaningless. But the nonsense which Gogol practised in his tale, "The Nose," like that of Laurence Sterne from whom he may have derived it, was full of hidden meaning. Yet this grotesque story of the sudden departure of Major Kovalev's nose from his face, its flight and masquerade, first as an official and then as itself, and its ultimate return to its embarrassed owner, is perhaps the least satisfying of these tales. It is an extreme expression of that conflict between the romanticist in Gogol and the realist, which Professor Janko Lavrin discusses in his Introduction. In such a conflict the romanticist is always tempted to escape out of the world of actuality altogether, which in fact Gogol may have done in his last years when he ceased, it would seem, to be quite sane and exchanged art for religious fanaticism. But so long as the tension between the dream and the fact is imaginatively sustained, there is nothing more conducive to a vital art.

In his earlier tales, of which we have here two fine examples, "Sorochinsky Fair" and "Christmas Eve," Gogol's imagination was immersed in the strong folk life of the Ukrainian country-side and the buffoonery and grotesque portraiture are exuberantly spontaneous. Although the notes of sadness and of sardonic mockery sound now and then, they are submerged in a flood of cynical beauty and gay abandon. In "How the Two Ivans Quarrelled" Gogol had become much more of a detached ironist, exposing the emptiness and stupidity of the petty gentry class to which he belonged and which he detested for its bloated vulgarity. But it is in "The Nevsky Prospect," a tale of the amorous adventures of two comrades and particularly in the fate of one of them, that he impersonated the doom of the extreme romanticist, whose dream usurps altogether the domain of fact and is at last shattered by the actuality it has denied. Nothing then remains. All life is a lie, a deceit, a delusion. The other tale, "The Coach," is by contrast only a perfectly told comic anecdote, which the early Chekhov might have written. But all six of them, reflecting as they do the different stages of Gogol's development, show, too, how essentially Russian he was and what a precursor of the great novelists who succeeded him. In gusto and expressiveness, in poetry and satire, they are works of genius, and Miss Portnova has finely preserved the nervous strength of Gogol's style in the translation.

HUGH I'A. FAUSSET

A Short History of Trans-Jordan. By B. A. Toukan. (Luzac and Co., London. 5s.)

The author, Mr. B. A. Toukan, was formerly Secretary to H. R. H. the Amir Abdullah, and later did valuable work for two years with the British Broadcasting Company, and so he is fully qualified to write on this subject. He gives an account of the geographical features of the country, which, being well-watered and fertile, has always had a reputation for agricultural wealth. At the present time it has a surplus for export to Syria and Palestine of grain, olives and grapes, as well as livestock.

Bounded on the North by Syria, on the East by Iraq, on the South by Hijaz, and on the West by Palestine, the country has shared the troubled history of its neighbours. Mr. Toukan gives a brief summary of the Hebrew Period and an account of the succeeding rule of the Assyrians, the Chaldeans, the Persians and the Nabataeans. These last made their capital at Petra, a city which, as Mr. Toukan says, has characteristics found nowhere else in the world. This treasury of late Hellenistic monuments is now accessible to every visitor.

The Greeks later founded a number of cities east of the Jordan, whose language, culture and religion were predominantly Greek, the most important of these being Gerasa or Jerash. On this site much excavation has been done and a great number of its monuments are now available for any who go to visit it. Under the Romans the country seems to have had about five times its present numbers and to have been well-populated and extensively cultivated. This was no doubt due to the state of security under the Romans, which has only in recent years been available again.

But, during the Roman rule, the Arabs were already migrating to Trans-Jordan and in due course the Muslims conquered the country. The author gives an interesting account of Trans-Jordan in modern times when, in 1921, as a consequence of events during the war of 1914 to 1918, the country was placed under the rule of the present Amir Abdullah, who had distinguished himself during the period of hostilities, both as soldier and as diplomat. Great Britain retained the Mandate over the country, which, however, attained effective self-government. Under the Amir's wise and tolerant rule, the country has prospered, freedom of speech and association being allowed to all, regardless of race, language or religion, and the modern inhabitants, numbering some 350,000, include, besides Muslim Arabs, some Christians, Caucasians, Turkomans, Baha'is and Druses.

During the war of 1939 to 1945 the Amir placed his army, the Arab Legion, at the disposal of Britain, and the troops gave valuable support to the Allied cause. At the time this review is being written, Trans-Jordan is being established as a sovereign independent state under a treaty, the terms of which make for the requirements both of international security in the Middle East and of the obligations to the United Nations.

The book has a foreword by H. R. H. the Amir Abdullah and it includes a map, but it lacks an index, which is an unfortunate omission. It can be recommended as a concise and very

interesting account of a country of interest to all who are concerned with the Near and Middle East.

MARGARET SMITH

Black Boy. By RICHARD WRIGHT. (Victor Gollancz, Ltd., London. 8*s.* 6*d.*)

Reading this account of a Negro's childhood and adolescence in the Southern States of America is like undergoing an operation both painful and repulsive, and, when it is over, wondering whether it was necessary.

After forcing myself to finish the book, and thinking a lot about it, I have come to the conclusion that it is likely to do the Cause in support of which it was written more harm than good. Mr. Wright is an unusual person. His acute sensitiveness and brooding melancholy would make him unusual among white people: it sets him completely apart from the mass of coloured people in the United States. They have, fortunately for them, so far escaped the morbid introspectiveness which is the cause of so much unhappiness among people of a dying culture. Their culture lies ahead. They live for the moment, neither nostalgic for the past nor nervous as to the future.

It is significant that all the other Negroes in the book fall into this category. None of them suffer the torments of the author as he gradually discovers that he is expected to behave as an inferior and to regard all white people as immeasurably above him in every way. Some of them do resent this at times, but, as Mr. Wright points out, they make their protest in the wrong tone. For instance, when a white overseer asks a Negro who brings him some money to put it in his pocket because his own hands are dirty, the Negro refuses: he "ain't no personal slave."

Coloured people are not, Mr. Wright says, emotional; there is "a strange absence of real kindness" from their natures; their joy is "timid"; they are "void of great hopes." All of which seems to me, with some experience of their warm-hearted generosity, the resounding gladness of their religious exercises, and their firm belief in the guiding hand of "de Lawd," as pictured in *Green Pastures*, to be nonsense—the sort of perversity in which a clever young man, smarting from the memory of an unhappy childhood (made unhappy by his own relations) and from the feeling that the world has been against him (as it undoubtedly has) is often inclined to indulge. Thus the effect of the book on me is one of exaggeration, of a state of affairs which is altogether deplorable and revolting being exhibited through the medium of a temperament abnormally depressed and exacerbated. Its very shrillness may be useful with readers who are unacquainted with the shameful treatment of Negroes in the Southern United States; but those who have made any study of the problem will, I think, be sorry to see it handled in this slap-dash manner and with such frequent references to those physical facts of life which are not as a rule discussed in mixed company. This aspect of the book makes me think of it with discomfort, almost with dislike.

HAMILTON FYFE

Man and His Meaning. By J. PARTON MILUM, PH.D., B.SC. (Lond.). (Skeffington and Son, Ltd., London. 15s.)

Dr. Milum concludes, "Should another dark age ensue, then in the enlightenment of the next dawn it will be for a historian to point with amazement to the patent fact that our Civilization went down because it failed to appreciate its most precious possession through anti-clerical prejudice and a blindness which denies the assumption upon which all its vaunted technical discoveries have been made,"—a conclusion that must influence our attitude towards the book as a whole.

In the first part Dr. Milum is concerned with the scientific argument to show that "the only conceivable answer to... continuity is of the nature of Mind, mind in the creatures, according to their capacity, induced by all-embracing and transcendent Mind," seeing that "the actual nature of mind in man is of the same nature as, and induced by, universal Mind." This argument is not founded on a *petitio principii*, but is truly inductive, and in this form cannot be easily dismissed by those materialists who claim that man is an accidental and ultimately worthless product of an unintelligible cosmic process, the opponents to whom the early chapters of the book are ostensibly addressed.

But in the last Chapter of Part I, another aspect of the general contention is opened by the submission that Christianity gives the answer to the question "What is the human?" in saying that "man is man only because he partakes of the nature of a transcendent spiritual Reality without whom the universe can neither be thought of nor exist." There is certainly no denying that, but the same answer was given with an equal clarity many thousand years before Jesus, and again by Gautama and Plato. Possibly Dr. Milum's reason for preferring what is in effect the Yoga of the New Testament, though its fundamental instructions have been disregarded in the general teaching of the Christian Churches, may be found in his statement that "the reality of the external universe remains; it is not 'Maya'—'Illusion' as the Mahatmas teach; but it is the medium of life, even as it bears the marks of creation by Spirit." But an esoteric reading of the New Testament as Yoga furnishes powerful evidence that the ultimate nature of matter as such is only appearance, a delusion of the physical senses. If this is not so, the miracles of Jesus can be explained only on the supposition that Jesus had those powers of creation which we attribute only to the Supreme Power. Also we shall again be confronted with that paradox of the Churches, which assigns the creation of evil to One who is by hypothesis all-good.

And although it is true enough that the pure doctrines of Christianity have very rarely been practised by the priests of its Church, especially with reference to the dictum here quoted that "he who doeth the will shall know the doctrine,"—an order of cause and effect that the Churches consistently reverse—it seems rather hopeless, after two millennia, to expect that mankind as a whole will submit to the discipline of non-attachment to worldly values which must be the preliminary step to "doing the will." Is it perhaps true, as Dr. Milum suggests, that another "dark age" is ahead of us? It seems,

at the present moment, not at all improbable. The latest great "achievement" of science, the atom bomb, might very well be the agent that will destroy our present self-condemned civilization.

J. D. BERESFORD

Bengal Lamenting. By FREDA BEDI. (The Lion Press, Lahore. Rs. 3/-)

If this eye-witness's description of the worst-stricken famine areas in January 1944 is less terrible than Sobha Singh's jacket drawing of a starving, almost naked woman's anguish over her starved child, it is perhaps because the misery of millions, put in words, demands an intellectual effort to apprehend, whereas the pictured misery of one is directly *felt.*

Mrs. Bedi's ascription of blame points the way to mitigation of the rigours of the new famine that may shortly be upon us. Firm dealing with hoarders and speculators is imperative. So is co-ordination of relief upon non-party lines. "In the face of a disaster that has no party affiliations every true lover of the country can unite," so forging lasting bonds, in shared humanitarian efforts.

Finally she makes it clear that famine's toll is more than deaths by starvation. Disease comes on the heels of malnutrition, and economic rehabilitation remains as a pressing need.

E. M. H.

Gentile and Jew: A Symposium. Edited by CHAIM NEWMAN. (Alliance Press, London, E. C. 4. 12*s.* 6*d.*)

"Antisemitism is a disease, malignant, evil, tendentious. To ignore it is to evidence a dangerous myopic state, for this particular phobia can germinate." So says Mr. Newman in his editorial preface to this collection of opinions of a hundred non-Jews "prominent in all walks of life." What he omits to mention is that pro-Semitism is a disease not less malignant, evil and tendentious and that its disappearance would materially aid the destruction of its opposite. Most unfortunately, this anthology is calculated to fan rather than to damp the flames and the tone of the editorial remarks may actually sow seeds of suspicion where none before existed. The contributions themselves (of which the best is the careful, judicious and unbiased survey by Collin Brooks) in a sense cancel themselves out and one applauds the succinctness of Lord Milne's: "You asked me to produce a solution for the insoluble—I can't," and the pith of Sir Herbert Williams's "One solution of the Jewish problem, of course, would be if the Jews were to talk less about it." But when the editor writes, in reference to the deepest level at which the problem presents itself: "Many Catholics quite frankly give up the hopeless task (of understanding how the "Trinity in unity works out") and address most of their worship to a fourth deity, the Mother of the Second Person in the Trinity," one can only excuse oneself from the controversy which might be implicit in even troubling to criticize.

HUGH ROSS WILLIAMSON

ENDS AND SAYINGS

"_____ *ends of verse*
And sayings of philosophers."
HUDIBRAS

Modern educated Indians do not feel that the culture of their forefathers has something vital and fundamental to offer to the world of tomorrow. Large masses seem untouched by the idea that India has a message for the world. In both groups there are of course exceptions. The educated Indians are educated to admire and respect the power and strength of the Occident, and that to such an extent that the mellowing influences of Western culture fail to leave a lasting impress on them. At best most of them are looking to the ideas and ideals of British Liberalism or of Russian Communism for raising India to an independent state. They seek aid, and even when they use words about India serving the world they are most vague as to what particular message India can give. The latest tendency, in the midst of discussions on the different political programmes, is towards Western modes of government and administration—Industrialisation, Militarisation, etc. Therefore Gandhiji's warning in the *Harijan* (19th May) is valuable. But how many Indians will ponder over this statement?

On India rests the burden of pointing the way to all the exploited races. She won't be able to bear that burden today if non-violence does not permeate us more than today. I have been trying to fit ourselves for that mission by giving a wider bend to our struggle. India will become a torch-bearer to the oppressed and exploited races only if she can vindicate the principle of non-violence in her own case, not jettison it as soon as independence of foreign control is achieved.

Neither in the so-called Democracy nor in Communism is there real hope for man. Both democratic and communist states are as warlike and war-mongering as any autocratic king of former years. The party politics of the Democracies and the one-party government of communist Russia both alike are founded upon the concepts of power and prestige, violence and war. Should India copy the "great Powers"—the U. S. A., Britain, Russia—and become as one of them? Can she become as one of them? And if she did would her teeming millions be free from the ills of civilised states? How does it profit a country to lose her own Soul in the hope of dominating the world? Which great power of the day is victorious over famine, disease, moral impoverishment?

Educated Indians need to educate themselves in the philosophy of Satyagraha. This theoretical task must precede the practice of it. How can the Satyagraha technique be applied to national problems unless its technique is used by the individual in daily life? How many among us are consciously and deliberately attempting to be non-violent in mind and morals, to be Satyagrahis in speech and action, in the small plain duties of life? That is the *real* beginning. Secure that heart attitude and all else will follow.

The appearance of a new quarterly, *Soil and Health* (38, Bedford Street, London, W. C. 2), evidences an awakening long overdue. Civilised man had thought he could flout Nature's laws but he is learning his mistake.

The nice balance of natural forces has always offered the best of object-lessons in universal brotherhood. Plants and animals are mutually dependent. The same law of give and take prevails between both and the soil, through which decaying matter is converted to new forms of life. In Nature's careful economy, all waste, however vile in fastidious human eyes, is utilised in her marvellous transformations.

But man has not played fair. He has tried to take without equivalent giving. Burning dung cakes as fuel, for example, is not only a mad extravagance but is cheating Nature. So, too, as has been recognised by Henry A. Wallace, U. S. Secretary of Commerce, among others, is the modern sewage system, which pours into the sea what the soil needs to maintain fertility. Soil impoverishment is a growing problem, except where, as in China and Japan, organic waste is returned regularly to the soil, and there is no doubt it has played its part in the present world food crisis.

Organic manure, it is claimed, contains everything necessary to plant life. Pests and diseases are reported practically non-existent for vegetables grown on composted night soil. Chemical fertilisers have entrenched themselves firmly in the last century, but Dr. Alexis Carrel suggested several years ago that "by increasing the abundance of the crops without replacing all the exhausted elements of the soil, [they] have indirectly contributed to change the nutritive value of cereal grains and vegetables." "The organism," he warned, "seems to have become more susceptible to degenerative diseases." Perhaps Mother Nature knows her business better than her clever offspring does!

There has been recent talk of an "up-to-date" sewage system for Bombay. We hope that before decisions are taken those responsible will acquaint themselves with the growing literature of "the Return," and adopt a conservational system which shall serve as model for other municipalities.

There is a warning for other countries in the startling rise in juvenile delinquency in the U. S. A. It has doubled since 1939 and statistics show that 71 per cent. of children sent to jail continue in a life of crime. In *Life* for April 8th the blame is laid chiefly at the family's door.

> Neglect, apathy, selfishness, indulgence all contribute to insecurity in home life [which] sends a child out on the streets to find companionship and excitement.

The New York Times of March 21st, editorially describing juvenile delinquency as "one of the most pressing problems of our time," ascribes the increase to a "breakdown in supervision all along the line," a relaxation of authority.

The root cause, we believe, lies generally in the absence of a sound philosophy of life which parents cannot give their children if they do not themselves have it. Personal happiness, personal rights, the "great dire heresy of separateness," have all been overstressed at the expense of duties and responsibilities as members of the family group and of society.

Tacitly or openly, and too often by parental example, children are betrayed into regarding "a good time" as a legitimate and normal end in life. Cinemas beyond a doubt have played their considerable part in upholding false standards and the net result is many youthful lives wrecked ere the journey is well begun.

Mr. Morarji Desai, Home and Revenue Minister, Bombay, was on sound ground when he stressed recently, in an informal discussion with the Executive Committee of the Indian Motion Picture Producers' Association, the importance of the film's rôle in moulding the juvenile and the uneducated mind. He disclaimed implying that puritanic principles should guide producers, but he felt, and rightly, that there was too much frivolity in the present-day film. The cinema has a great influence and the responsibility inseparable from it. No film producer has the right to subvert public morals and Mr. Desai did well to stress the need for films calculated positively to improve them and to combine education with entertainment, wherever possible.

"We Are Not Helpless," proclaimed *The Christian Science Monitor* (U.S.A.) March 29th, sounding a timely tocsin against the paralysing suggestions of impotence with which the press bombards us. In India as well as in America we are encouraged in supine acquiescence, in being helpless pawns of circumstance, by headlines not unlike "Millions Must Starve," "Coal Strike Certain" etc.

There is very little original thinking, and more people act almost entirely under suggestion than are at all aware of doing so. Convince a man that nothing can be done and nothing will be done. You have emasculated him. It is important to be on our guard against suggestions that will undermine our manhood.

As the *Monitor* remarks, "Millions do not have to starve."

> If we care as much about getting food to the famine fronts as we did about getting ammunition to the fighting fronts, we'll get it there—and in time.

Do we have to sit back and deplore a strike in an essential service, scavenging or transit (especially during a food crisis like the present), while employers and employed, as the editorial puts it about the American coal strike, "conduct a private war at the public's expense"? We do not.

> We can organise industrial peace—if we really want to do it. All we have to do is to make it clear that the general welfare is superior to any special interest.

Nor do we ever have to drift again into another war, or into anything else. "The first step is to awaken to the mindless mesmerism which would doom us to destruction." But is it too much to expect also of the headline-makers that they abjure suggesting defeatism and preach virility?

That the influence of Buddhism is to be seen in modern educational institutions and theories is put forward by Gunaseela Vitanage in *The Buddhist* (Colombo) for May 1946. The Enlightened One himself had said:—

> Neither father nor mother nor any other relative will do a man so much good as a well-directed mind.

The Buddhist reform consisted largely in making available to all the truth which had been the jealously guarded prerogative of the few. The Buddha's

followers naturally, therefore, emphasised free and popular education. Each monastery was a school, and there were many monasteries—the Emperor Asoka alone is said to have founded 84,000 in all parts of India. Nor was education even in the monastery schools confined to the rudiments.

The several great Buddhist universities drew scholars from abroad as well as from all parts of India. Nalanda University and others flourished for many centuries. When the Western Universities arose in response to a growing urge for higher knowledge, the pattern was before them in the comparable institutions of Islam, which, it is claimed, in turn were modelled on the great Buddhist Universities of ancient India.

A valuable feature of the curriculum, even of the monastery schools, which Mr. Vitanage outlines, was "the science of eternal values or Buddha Dhamma with its attendant ethics, psychology and philosophy." The modern graduate is launched upon the sea of life, a well-built ship, well-manned, well-stocked, with valuable cargo, but all too often lacking chart and compass.

The need for making philosophy practical is recognised in the appeal for more members recently published by the British Institute of Philosophy. The "intellectual and moral confusion which characterises our age" is rightly assigned as "the root cause of its troubles and disasters."

To build up a body of positive, instead of merely critical, thought, as a basis for well-considered constructive action in the spheres of morals, of politics, and of economics, is the only right course.

Truly. "Formulating thought and linking it with action" is indeed the need. But can modern philosophy free itself from its squirrel-wheel of dialectical subtleties and inhibitions? In their understandable reaction against the mediæval superstitions of blind faith, Western philosophers and their Eastern followers have often seemed to pride themselves on an incredulity as superstitious and as blind. Mere negatives and speculation-spinning can no more save our truth-starved world than paper promises can feed the famished millions.

The irascible philosopher with the toothache has too long symbolised a theory of life that looked all right on paper but which did not work. Is it too much to expect of our modern "lovers of wisdom" that, like the spiritual philosophers of old, they demonstrate that truth can be not only held but also lived?

There have been thinkers, in the ancient past, as in more recent times, who raised a frame of thought so broad it could accommodate the universe and man and give to life a purpose and a plan. Let our philosophers "prove all things," yes, but not forget to "hold fast that which is good."